

Saturday

August 31, 2024

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Travelers are getting a head start on the long Labor Day weekend

By DAVID KOENIG
 AP Business Writer

Airports, highways, beaches and theme parks are expected to be packed across the U.S. this Labor Day weekend as a lot Americans mark the unofficial end of summer the same way they celebrated the season's unofficial start: by traveling.

After what's already been a record-breaking summer for air travel, the Transportation Security Administration predicted its agents would screen more than 17 million people during a holiday period that started Thursday and runs through next Wednesday, about 8% more than last year.

The TSA anticipates Friday being the busiest day. In a sign the summer travel season really is winding down, however, the agency said that fewer than 2 million passengers passed through airport security checkpoints one day this week — the first time that has happened since early March.



Continued on Page 2

Traffic, left, crosses the Bourne Bridge onto Cape Cod, Friday, Aug. 30, 2024, in Bourne, Mass.

Associated Press

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

SUNDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
 SINGER
 6:30 - 8:30pm

MONDAY:
ANGELA FLORES
 VIOLINIST
 6:30 - 8:30pm

TUESDAY:
JEAN PAUL
 SAXOPHONIST
 6:30 - 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY:
EDDIE KROON
 SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
 VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm

KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm

THURSDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
 SINGER
 6:30 - 8:30pm

FRIDAY:
RICKY THOMAS
 GUITARIST
 7:00 - 9:00pm

SATURDAY:
EDDIE KROON
 SINGER
 4:00 - 6:00pm

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY
 PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY



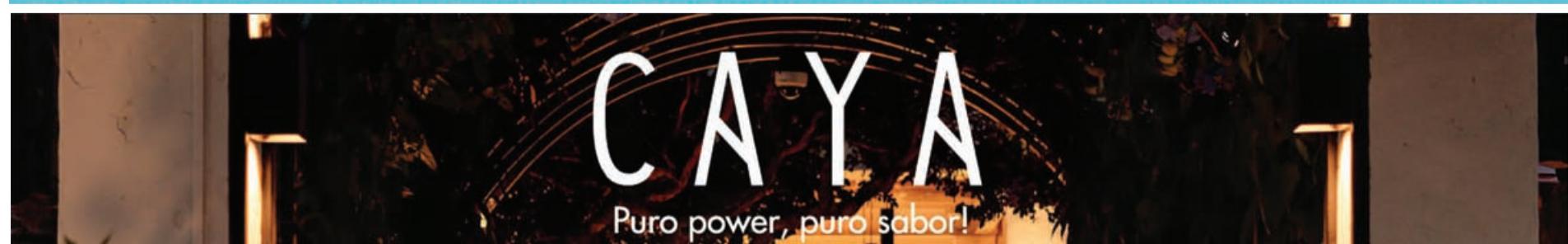
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Travelers are getting a head start on the long Labor Day weekend

Continued from Front

If you plan to be part of the crowds heading out of town to enjoy one last blast of summer, here is a rundown of what you need to know.

How is holiday travel going so far?

Busy, as expected. TSA screened 2.75 million travelers at the nation's airports on Thursday, nearly 130,000 more than it screened on the same day last year.

Airlines canceled more than 500 U.S. flights Thursday, with nearly 300 of those at Dulles and Reagan National airports near Washington, D.C.

Plenty of people appeared to have heeded experts' advice to get away as early as possible on Friday. Lines of cars and passengers appeared at Los Angeles International Airport before the sun was up.

Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport was buzzing during morning commute hours but had plenty of room in its parking lots and terminals a few hours later. Boston resident Dani Fleming flew across the country to visit her son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren. She got to the airport at 4:30 a.m. for her departing flight and was pleasantly surprised by how quickly the lines moved both there and at San Francisco International Airport.

"The flight was easy. (I napped for a little bit, watched movies," Fleming said.

Where are the potential trouble spots?

Weather is the leading cause of flight delays. Forecasts call for rain and maybe scattered thunderstorms from Texas to New England plus parts of Florida over the weekend, and showering more of the Southeast on Monday.

Seattle-Tacoma International Airport was still working to restore all services after what airport officials described as a possible cyberattack last weekend.

Flights have been running normally all week, but airport told passengers to arrive extra early for flights



Travelers use kiosks to check in for flights in the Delta Airlines ticketing area at the Los Angeles International Airport in Los Angeles, Friday, Aug. 30, 2024.

and to avoid checking bags, especially if they are on a smaller airline, because of problems with the bag-sorting system.

Michael Novick got to SeaTac 30 minutes earlier than usual and checked three bags for his American Airlines flight Friday. "I was a little concerned about what things might look like, but it was absolutely seamless," he said. "It was a normal day."

The only thing out of the ordinary: gate agents checked boarding passes manually.

What are prices like?

Motorists are getting a break on gasoline. The nationwide average Friday was \$3.35 per gallon, compared to \$3.83 a year ago, according to AAA.

For electric vehicles, the average price for a kilowatt of power at an L2 commercial charging station is about 34 cents. The average is under 25 cents in Kansas and Missouri but tops 40 cents in several states, including New Hampshire, Tennessee and Kentucky. Hawaii is the costliest, at 56 cents.

Average airfares in July were down 7.1% from June and 2.8% from July 2023, according to the government's consumer price index.

The trend appeared to be accelerating as the peak summer-vacation season comes to an end.

"Now we're falling into that traditional fall season when demand slumps, and you're also seeing that in airfares," said Steve Hafner, CEO of the travel metasearch site Kayak.

When is the best time to hit the road?

Transportation-data provider INRIX says the worst time to travel by car on Friday will be between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. That flips on Saturday, when you'll want to avoid driving between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.

For the return trip, pretty much all day Monday — from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. — will be a slog, according to INRIX.

When will airports be busiest?

The TSA expects to screen 2.86 million people Friday. That's an impressive number, but it still won't rank in the top 15 days in TSA's history — 14 of which have come this year. The single-day record of 3.01 million was set on July 7, the Sunday after Independence Day.

TSA says it has enough screeners to keep the time it takes to get through regular lines to 30 minutes or less and to no more than 10 minutes for PreCheck lines. American Airlines expects to operate 6,400 flights Friday, the same as Thursday, and 6,300 on Labor Day itself.

What should I do if my flight

is delayed or canceled?

First, check your itinerary before leaving for the airport. It's better to be stuck at home than stranded at the airport.

If your flight is canceled, the airline might automatically rebook you. That might not be the best option.

"Get on the phone (to the airline's help center), get in front of an agent, reach out to the airline via social media if you have to, but find out what the other options are," says Julian Kheel, the founder and CEO of Points Path, a browser extension that lets users compare fares with deals available using frequent-flier points.

Kheel said agents at the airport have more leeway to help, but they might be inundated if there are many canceled flights. DIY rebooking on the airline website or app might be faster, he said.

Phone tip: Some experts say if the airline has international help numbers, call one of those to get through more quickly.

What about refunds and reimbursement?

Airlines are required to provide refunds — including for extra fees paid — to passengers whose flights are canceled for any reason. However, they are not required to pay cash compensation, and no major U.S. airlines do.

Only Alaska, Southwest

Associated Press

and JetBlue even promise travel vouchers if the cancellation is their fault.

If you're stuck overnight, ask the airline about covering the costs of a hotel, meals and ground transportation. All major U.S. airlines except Frontier promise to help with all three for "controllable" disruptions, according to the Transportation Department's airline-policy dashboard.

Keep receipts for all out-of-pocket expenses in case you can file a claim later.

A few final tips

— Leave early. Everything will take longer than you expect, including getting through airport security.

— Watch the weather. Even if skies are clear at home, there could be storms at your flight's destination or along your road route. Have a backup route.

— Avoid checking bags. About one in every 170 checked bags was lost, damaged or stolen in May, the latest month for which government figures are available, but as the Seattle airport outage shows, stuff happens.

— Be nice. Flight cancellations and bumper-to-bumper traffic are frustrating, but you won't be the only one who is stuck. Customer-service agents are busy during peak travel periods, so it's important to be patient and respectful while they try to help you. □

Judge allows smoking to continue in Atlantic City casinos, dealing blow to workers

By WAYNE PARRY

Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) —

A judge on Friday allowed smoking to continue in Atlantic City's casinos, giving some measure of relief to the city's struggling casino industry while rebuffing workers who have long sought to be able to breathe clean air on the casino floor.

The ruling by Superior Court Judge Patrick Bartels represented a major victory for the city's nine casinos, most of which are winning less money from in-person gamblers than they did before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. But it was a big setback for workers who have been trying for four years to ban smoking in their workplaces, first by trying to get lawmakers to change the law, then by filing a lawsuit. A lawyer for the workers said she will ask the state Supreme Court to consider the case on an expedited basis.

The casinos had warned that thousands of jobs and millions in gambling revenue and taxes could be lost if smoking was banned.

"We are gratified by the court's decision to dismiss plaintiff's complaint and deny its attempt to change the Smoke-Free Air Act outside of the legislative process," said Mark Giannantonio, president of Resorts Casino and of the Casino



Atlantic City casino workers hold signs during a rally in Trenton, N.J., on April 5, 2024, after the United Auto Workers and casino workers filed a lawsuit challenging New Jersey's clean indoor air law that exempts casino workers from its protections.

Associated Press

Association of New Jersey. He said the industry, the city and the main casino workers union, Local 54 of United Here "have taken significant steps over the years to create a healthier environment for employees and patrons, including limiting smoking to just a fraction of the floor-space."

"We look forward to continuing to work with stakeholders towards a solution that addresses the health concerns of our employees, while also protecting the collective interest and well-being of the

entire Atlantic City workforce," Giannantonio said. Anti-smoking workers vowed to continue pushing for smoke-free casinos.

"This fight is far from over," said Lamont White, a Borgata dealer and a leader of the anti-smoking movement. "While today's outcome is disappointing, our determination remains unshaken."

White said the ruling gives legislators "even more reason to uphold their responsibility to finally do the right thing and pass the bipar-

tisan legislation that New Jerseyans overwhelmingly support," he said. "It's time to make things right for the thousands of us workers still working and living without the same protection afforded to every other New Jerseyan."

Nancy Erika Smith, who argued the case on behalf of the workers, decried the ruling and promised to appeal it. "While the rest of the nation moves away from poisoning workers for profits, New Jersey shames itself," she said in a written statement. "As long

as the Governor, the Legislature and the Courts allow the extremely rich casino industry to poison its workers, we will continue our fight."

Whether to ban smoking is one of the most controversial issues not only in Atlantic City casinos, but in other states where workers have expressed concern about secondhand smoke. They are waging similar campaigns in Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Kansas and Virginia. Currently, smoking is allowed on 25% of the casino floor in Atlantic City. But those areas are not contiguous, and the practical effect is that secondhand smoke is present in varying degrees throughout the casino floor.

The lawsuit filed in April by the United Auto Workers, which represents dealers at the Bally's, Caesars and Tropicana casinos, sought to overturn New Jersey's indoor smoking law, which bans it in virtually every workplace except casinos.

In a May 13 hearing before the judge in Trenton, Smith raised issues of equal protection under the law, and what she called a constitutional right to safety. The judge, however, said the workers' "reliance on a constitutional right to safety is not well-settled law" and predicted they would not be likely to prevail with such a claim. □

Child abuse images removed from AI image-generator training source, researchers say

By MATT O'BRIEN

AP Technology Writer

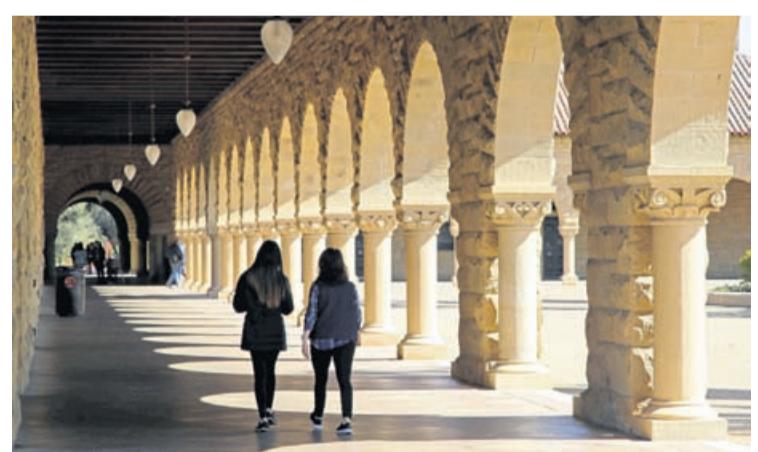
Artificial intelligence researchers said Friday they have deleted more than 2,000 web links to suspected child sexual abuse imagery from a database used to train popular AI image-generator tools.

The LAION research database is a huge index of online images and captions that's been a source for leading AI image-makers such as Stable Diffusion and Midjourney. But a report last year by the Stanford Internet Observatory found it contained links to sexually explicit images

of children, contributing to the ease with which some AI tools have been able to produce photorealistic deep-fakes that depict children. That December report led LAION, which stands for the nonprofit Large-scale Artificial Intelligence Open Network, to immediately remove its dataset. Eight months later, LAION said in a blog post that it worked with the Stanford University watchdog group and anti-abuse organizations in Canada and the United Kingdom to fix the problem and release a cleaned-up database for future AI research.

Stanford researcher David Thiel, author of the December report, commended LAION for significant improvements but said the next step is to withdraw from distribution the "tainted models" that are still able to produce child abuse imagery.

One of the LAION-based tools that Stanford identified as the "most popular model for generating explicit imagery" — an older and lightly filtered version of Stable Diffusion — remained easily accessible until Thursday, when the New York-based company Runway ML removed it from the AI model repository



Students walk on the Stanford University campus on March 14, 2019, in Stanford, Calif.

Associated Press

Hugging Face. Runway said in a statement Friday it was a "planned deprecation of research models and code that have not been actively maintained."

The cleaned-up version of

the LAION database comes as governments around the world are taking a closer look at how some tech tools are being used to make or distribute illegal images of children. □

Contract security officers leave jail in Atlanta after nonpayment of contract

By KATE BRUMBACK

Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Some security officers at a jail in Atlanta that is under federal investigation walked off the job after the Fulton County sheriff's office failed to pay money owed to the third-party contractor that employs them. The Fulton County Sheriff's Office said in a news release that it is facing "a significant budget crisis" and owed an outstanding balance of more than \$1 million to Strategic Security Corp. The company notified its employees Thursday afternoon that the contract had ended, that they would be clocked out at 2:15 p.m. and that they should not report to work at the jail going forward.

The sheriff's office said that "created an immediate safety issue" at the county's main jail and employees from all divisions were sent to staff the jail. There were 17 contract officers working at the time, 13 at the main jail in Atlanta and four at the south annex in Union City, sheriff's office spokesperson Natalie Ammons said. There are three shifts in a 24-hour period and there were a total of 74 contractors working on rotation to cover all of the shifts, she said.

Joe Sordi, CEO of Strategic Security Corp., told reporters Friday that his employees were hired to do jobs that did not involve direct contact with people housed in



The Fulton County Jail is shown, April 11, 2023, in Atlanta.

the jail. From the start of the contract in July 2023, the sheriff's office immediately fell behind on payment and never fully paid what it owed in any single billing cycle. Ammons said the sheriff's office did pay some bills in full during the life of the contract and that the current invoice is 90 days past due.

Under the terms of the contract, the company could have suspended services once the sheriff's office defaulted on two billing cycles, Sordi said. But they didn't do that because of a "moral obligation" to the officers and to the sheriff's deputies working in the jail. Instead, he said, they continued to pay their employees and tried to engage the sheriff's office, which kept making small payments to "keep us at bay" but never paid the entire principal due.

The sheriff's office has been "severely delinquent" since February and Sheriff Pat Labat kept making excuses for why the money hadn't been paid, Sordi said. The CEO said he kept extending deadlines but gave the sheriff a final date of this past Wednesday to provide an answer about whether he could come up with the money.

Sordi said that Thursday was the "first time in several months" that the sheriff returned his calls.

"We spoke and his answer was that, 'We simply just don't have the money,'" Sordi said.

Sordi said his company is "actively pursuing formal measures to reengage Fulton County" if the sheriff's office wants to continue services. But he also said he is "exploring any method possible" to secure payment of the mon-

ey owed. Board of Commissioners Chairman Robb Pitts released a statement Friday saying that the sheriff's office signed the contract to provide staffing for watchtowers within the jail without the involvement of the county purchasing department. He said the commissioners approved funding as part of the fiscal year 2024 budget, allocating \$1.3 million based on the contract usage at the time and with input from the sheriff's office.

It wasn't until this month that the sheriff's office notified county management that it had already spent more than a \$1 million over the budgeted amount, Pitts said. Funding for the sheriff's office and the jail has increased by 66% since 2019, but the sheriff "has consistently failed to demonstrate basic budget management practices,"

Associated Press

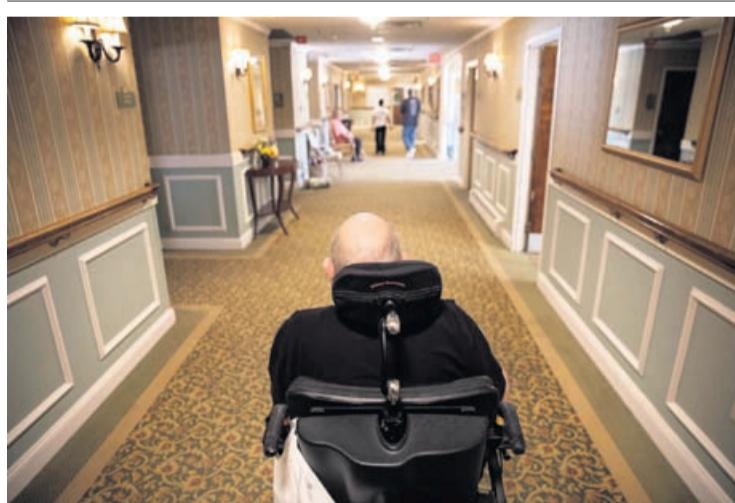
Pitts said.

"The public has every right to be concerned about these issues," Pitts said. The Board of Commissioners plans to discuss the matter at its meeting next week.

Labat said that nearly 50 of the contract security officers came to the jail Thursday evening and were given conditional offers of employment and some were able to work immediately after completing paperwork.

The U.S. Department of Justice last year opened a civil rights investigation into jail conditions in the county, citing violence and filthy conditions. Federal authorities specifically mentioned the September 2022 death of Lashawn Thompson, one of more than a dozen people who has died in county custody over the last two years. Thompson, 35, died in a bedbug-infested cell in the jail's psychiatric wing.

A state legislative committee formed last year to examine conditions at the jail concluded last week that more cooperation was needed between top county officials. Labat has long acknowledged the problems and has called for a new \$1.7 billion jail to replace the crumbling main jail on Rice Street. But county commissioners in July voted 4-3 instead for a \$300 million project to renovate the existing jail and to build a new building to house inmates with special needs. □



A resident makes his way to the dining room for lunch at a nursing home in Rockland, Mass., on March 6, 2020.

Associated Press

By STEVE LeBLANC

Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Massachusetts' oversight of nursing homes would be strengthened, LGBTQ+ nursing home

residents would be protected against discrimination, and better controls would be in place to protect against the spread of infectious disease outbreaks, under a new bill

Nursing home oversight would be tightened under a bill passed in Massachusetts

lawmakers passed this week. Approved on Thursday, the bill would require long-term care facilities to provide staff training on the rights of LGBTQ+ older adults and those living with HIV, and bar staff from discriminating based on a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status or HIV status.

The proposal also would streamline the licensing process for "small house nursing homes," alternative care centers that focus on smaller groups of residents

and using familiar domestic routines. Long-term care facilities would also be required to develop outbreak response plans to help contain the spread of disease and ensure communication with state health officials, residents, families and staff.

The bill would also require state health officials to establish training programs on infection prevention and control, resident care plans and staff safety programs. The Department of Public Health would be required to come up with plans to let resi-

dents of a facility engage in face-to-face contact, communications, and religious and recreational activities. Some long-term care facilities became hubs of COVID-19 transmission. In 2020, at least 76 people died in a long-term care veterans home in Massachusetts, one of the nation's worst COVID-19 outbreaks. Those who make the decision to put their loved ones in a nursing home or long-term care facility deserve to know they will be protected, said Democratic Senate President Karen Spilka. □

Japan's defense ministry seeks record budget as it faces growing threat from China

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's Defense Ministry on Friday sought a record 8.5 trillion yen (\$59 billion) budget for the next year to fortify its deterrence on southwestern islands against China's increasing threat.

Defense officials were also focusing on unmanned weapons and artificial intelligence to make up for the declining number of servicemembers as a result of the country's shrinking population.

The ministry's request for 2025 marks the third year of Japan's rapid five-year military buildup plan under the government's ongoing security strategy. Japan aims to spend 43 trillion yen (\$297 billion) through 2027 to double its annual military spending to around 10 trillion yen, making it the world's No. 3 military spender after the United States and China.

The budget request was approved at the Defense Ministry meeting Friday before a submission to the Finance Ministry for negotiations through December.

Japan has been rapidly



The Japan Ground Self-Defense Force tanks parade during the Self-Defense Forces Day at Asaka Base in Asaka, north of Tokyo, on Oct. 23, 2016.

Associated Press

building up the defense of the southwestern region in recent years amid China's growing military threats and tension in the regional seas. China has escalated clashes with the Philippine coast guards in disputed waters in the South China Sea and sent a fleet of coast guard boats to

routinely violate territorial waters around Japanese-controlled disputed islands in the East China Sea that Beijing also claims. A hefty 970 billion yen (\$6.7 billion) of the budget request for 2025 covers the cost of bolstering strike-back capability with the development and purchases of long-

range missiles and equipment for their launch, including from an Aegis-class destroyer. About one-third of it goes to a satellite constellation aimed at bolstering the capability to detect missile-related activity, as North Korea, China and Russia develop hypersonic missiles that are harder to

detect and track.

While pushing military buildup, Japan must deal with shrinking troop numbers and is focusing on developing and buying more drones for surveillance and combat, requesting 103 billion yen (\$710 million). It also seeks 314 billion yen (\$2.17 billion) to build three new multi-purpose compact destroyers that require 90 crew members, less than half the crew size currently needed.

Japanese defense officials say combat drones are "game changers" that can be on hourslong missions and lower human losses in combat, and they consider it a main pillar of Japan's ongoing military buildup. The unmanned weapons can also help a country struggling with its aging and shrinking population.

Japan has been struggling to fulfill Self-Defense Force, or SDF, troop levels at 247,000 people.

The SDF has faced difficulty attracting young applicants in recent years and fulfilled only half of its recruiting target of 19,598 last year, making it the lowest in the 70 years of its history. □

Major power outage hits Venezuela's capital, with Maduro government blaming 'sabotage'

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Venezuelans awoke Friday to a major power outage in the capital, Caracas, and several states. President Nicolas Maduro's government blamed the outage, which it said began about 4:50 a.m., on "electrical sabotage."

Freddy Nanez, the communications minister, said officials were working to restore power. "Nobody will take away our peace and tranquility of the Venezuelan people," he wrote in a message shared with journalists on Telegram.

Nanez said in a voice message on Telegram that all 24 of Venezuela's states had been at least partially impacted. He characterized the outage as a "des-

perate" attempt by Maduro's opponents to violently oust the president.

"The entire national government has been activated to overcome this new aggression," he said.

Venezuela in 2019, during a period of political unrest, suffered from regular power outages that the government almost always blamed on its opponents, but that energy experts said were the result of brush fires damaging transmission lines and poor maintenance of the country's hydroelectric infrastructure.

Many of the energy problems have subsided as the South American nation's economy has stabilized, high inflation has eased and a de facto dollariza-

tion has reduced shortages of imported goods.

Still, following last month's contested presidential election, officials are quick to blame opponents for even minor disruptions. That was the case on Tuesday, when a brownout affected Caracas and several central states.

"This is a constant strategy of the opposition, the enemies of this country, to impact the population," Diosdado Cabello, the newly appointed interior minister who is believed to be the second most powerful man in the country, said after the earlier outage.

Residents of the capital were taking Friday's disruption in stride.

Traffic during the normally

busy rush hour was lighter than usual and some people complained about being unable to communicate with family members due to a lack of cellphone

service.

Alejandra Martinez, a 25-year-old salesclerk, said she noticed the power went out when a fan stopped working. □



Buildings stand in darkness during a power outage in Caracas, Venezuela, at dawn on Friday, Aug. 30, 2024.

Associated Press

Germany deports 28 Afghan nationals to their homeland, the first since the Taliban takeover in 2021

By STEFANIE DAZIO

Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Germany deported Afghan nationals to their homeland on Friday for the first time since August 2021 when the Taliban returned to power.

Government spokesman Steffen Hebestreit described the 28 Afghan nationals as convicted criminals but did not clarify their offenses.

"The security interests of Germany clearly outweigh the claim for protection of criminals and individuals endangering national security," Hebestreit said in a statement.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, speaking near Leipzig during a local election campaign event Friday, called it "a clear sign that those who commit crimes cannot count on us not deporting them, but that we will look for ways to do so."

German news agency dpa reported, citing information from the federal states involved in the deportations, that the offenses included



Federal Minister of the Interior and Home Affairs Nancy Faeser, second from right, attends the special session of the Bundestag's Committee on Internal Affairs, in Berlin, Friday, Aug. 30, 2024.

Associated Press

rape, serious arson and manslaughter.

Interior Minister Nancy Faeser called the move a security issue for Germany.

"You have seen that we have enforced the law and deported criminals back to Afghanistan," she said during a news conference Friday afternoon. "In my view,

this is necessary to maintain trust in the rule of law."

However, Julia Duchrow, secretary general of Amnesty International in Germany, blasted the deportations.

In a statement Friday, she said the government bowed to political pressure during an election cam-

paign. She added that Afghanistan is not safe and alleged that the deportations violate international law.

Berlin does not have diplomatic relations with the Taliban, requiring the government to work through other channels.

It's unlikely that Friday's ac-

tions will lead to a wider thawing of relations between Germany and the Taliban, especially after last week's issuing of the first set of laws to prevent vice and promote virtue in Afghanistan. They include a requirement for a woman to conceal her face, body and voice outside the home.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock has slammed the morality laws in posts on X.

While Hebestreit said the deportations have been in the works for months, they occurred a week after a deadly knife attack in the town of Solingen in which the suspect is a Syrian citizen who had applied for asylum in Germany.

The suspect was supposed to be deported to Bulgaria last year but reportedly disappeared for a time and avoided deportation. He was ordered to be held Sunday on suspicion of murder and membership of a terrorist organization pending further investigation and a possible indictment. □

Ethiopia is worried over a defense deal between Egypt and Somalia as tensions rise in Horn of Africa

By OMAR FARUK

Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP)

— Ethiopia is increasingly concerned over a recent defense deal between Egypt and Somalia, two countries that Addis Ababa

is embroiled in disputes with amid rising tensions in the Horn of Africa region.

Cairo and Mogadishu earlier this month signed a security agreement during a visit to the Egyptian capital by Somali President Has-

san Sheikh Mohamud, who held talks with his Egyptian host, President Abdel-Fatah el-Sissi.

Details of the deal have not been made public but Ali Abdi Aware, the Somali ambassador to Cairo, told a radio station in Mogadishu that the arrival of military equipment from Egypt to Somalia this week was "the first practical step to implementing" that deal.

Speaking by phone from Cairo to Arlaadi Media radio on Tuesday, he also asserted that under the agreement, Egyptian troops would be deployed to Somalia after Dec. 31, when an African Union's peacekeeping mission to Somalia ends.

There was no confirmation of such plans from Egypt, which has been seeking to strengthen its influence

in the Horn of Africa. Cairo has also not confirmed sending military equipment to Somalia.

The prospect of having Egyptian troops next door has raised concerns in Ethiopia. The foreign ministry in Addis Ababa issued a statement saying the country "cannot stand idle while other actors are taking measures to destabilize the region."

There are two key disputes involving the three African countries.

The first dispute between Ethiopia and Egypt is over Ethiopia's construction of a \$4 billion dam on the Blue Nile, a key tributary to the Nile River.

Egypt fears it will have a devastating effect on its water and irrigation supply downstream unless Ethiopia takes its needs into ac-

count. Ethiopia is using the dam to generate badly needed electricity.

The second dispute between Ethiopia and Somalia is over Somalia's breakaway region of Somaliland. Somalia has sought to block landlocked Ethiopia's ongoing efforts to gain access to the Red Sea via a contentious agreement with Somaliland to lease a stretch of land along Somaliland's coastline, where Ethiopia would establish a marine force base. In return, according to Somaliland authorities, Ethiopia would recognize Somaliland as an independent country.

Somaliland seceded from Somalia more than 30 years ago but is not recognized by the African Union or the United Nations as an independent state. □



Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali speaks during a panel session at the 49th annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum, Jan. 23, 2019, in Davos, Switzerland.

Associated Press

Today is going to be a good day

(Oranjestad)—Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

Nature Calls



The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website www.arubanationalpark.org

Philip's Animal Garden



To stay with the animals, let's hop to an amazing place. Something different to do, an experience that is to be enjoyed by people of all ages. Welcome to Philip's Animal Garden. We are not talking about a zoo here, this is actually a sanctuary for all types of creatures, from

horses to peacocks, kangaroos to turtles, monkeys, goats, and many, many more different species. The place was founded in 2009 and it is the only organization rescuing and rehabilitating exotic animals in Aruba, which has resulted in an amazing collection of these animals. They provide a suitable living environment for all the rescued animals. Up until now the owner, Philip, has built this shelter with his own efforts; building all the cages from scratch, designing all structures and welding them with his own bare hands. His goal is to upgrade the facilities to a world-class animal shelter with veterinary care and round-the-clock staffs. With the input from the Aruban community and visitors they provide the best care for these animals. Please check out their website for more information: www.philipsanimalgarden.com.

The Lighthouse



No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in 1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light. www.arubalighthouse.com will give you more information.

Kayak in the Mangroves



Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you

are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some work-out -as it might get a little windy and rough-, you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. It's fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. There are several companies that offer kayak tours, we had good experience with The Shack Kayak Tours Aruba, find them on Facebook.

Take an "off-road" sightseeing tour



A must-do activity on the island is for sure taking an off-road sightseeing tour. If you have a rented car, you can drive through the northeastern side of Aruba and explore the natural pools, caves, rock formations and gorgeous view of the Atlantic Ocean. To access most of these sights, like the natural pool (Conchi) and the Guadirikiri and Fontein caves, you must enter through the Arikok National Park and buy a day pass. Then you drive up the rugged road that leads you through the white dunes, caves and along the wind turbines. Other locations, like the Ayo and Casibari Rock formation are situated more in the center of the island, and are free for guests, 24 hours a day.

Go for a shopping spree in the city center



Need a new bathing suit? Head to the city center of Oranjestad, where there is countless of different stores—both high end and more affordable—that can offer you the service you deserve! Local shopping stores often offer a more affordable price, and have a variety of clothes, shoes, bathing suits, purses and more. Along the Royal Plaza strip, there are numerous jewelry stores with great quality jewelry. In the Renaissance mall, you can shop high-end luxury brands, like Dolce & Gabbana, Kate Spade, Louis Vuitton and more.

Around the high-rise hotel area near Palm Beach, the Paseo Herencia Mall contain a variety of shopping stores, restaurants, small food stands and even a movie theater! □

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Aruba Tourism Authority honored a loyal visitor at Casa del Mar Beach Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassador of Aruba. The honoree was respectively honored with a certificate for her years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10+ years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Goodwill Ambassador (20+ years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Emerald Ambassador (35+ years consecutively visiting Aruba)



The honoree was:

Goodwill Ambassador

Ms. Barbara Miller from Pomona

New York, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing

the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Casa del Mar Beach Resort bestowed the certificate upon the honoree, presented her with gifts, and thanked her for choosing Aruba as her favorite vacation destination, as her home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honoree was:

- Aruba's people.
- Aruba's beaches.
- Aruba's weather.
- "Family"
- "Aruba has really good casino"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honoree for her continued visits to the "One Happy Island".

Aruba's most family-friendly beaches



(Oranjestad)—One of the biggest concerns that parents have when travelling with their children is a guarantee of their safety and healthy enjoyment. Therefore, we thought it would be a great help to travelling parents to list off some the most family-friendly beaches around the island.

Baby Beach in San Nicolas

Baby Beach is one Aruba's most popular and visited beaches, and for good reason: This sandy and quiet lagoon is a great place for parents to sit back and relax while their children

play in the shallow shores of the beach. Beside the relaxing atmosphere, there are also several services that may accommodate your stay, like a parking lot, sun tent rentals, chairs, bathrooms and a snack bar right at the far left of the beach.

Mangel Halto in Pos Chiquito

Mangel Halto is situated in the back streets of the Pos Chiquito city. Though there are several stairs on the sides of the beach cliff leading you down, the best spot for families to hang out is across the bridge, passed the mangrove trees near the entrance sign. Here, there are small and big palapas, perfect for big and small families to set up their belongings. In this area, the shore is also shallow, falling right around your knee before slowly getting deeper: perfect for kids to safely play.

Eagle Beach/Palm Beach in the hotel area

Yet another highly popular beach site, Eagle Beach and Palm Beach is where most of our visitors go to tan, swim or play in the white sand. Because they are near the low-rise and high-

rise hotel areas, these beaches are the most accessible for visitors on foot. These beaches also offer many palapas free to use, but you can also rent chairs and tents. Much like Baby Beach, these sites are one of the best beaches for your children to play and build sand castles.

Boca Catalina in Malmok

Boca Catalina is a small bay beach near the Malmok beach area further down the hotel areas. Though it may not be a very sandy beach, it is relatively quiet and tranquil. This is a great place for family to lay down a big blanket and have a little picnic. This is also one of the best places to snorkel, as this area is filled with little fish and corals, even close to the shore.

Palm Island

Ok, this one is technically not a beach, but a must-visit attraction for family fun. This small water park oasis is located further down the Mangel Halto Beach and is reachable by boat. This water park offers 6 hours of fun activities, food, drinks, and a chance to see pink flamingoes up close!

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Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
Coming Soon: Moments & Memories Jewelry,
and El Patio Tacos & Tequila



Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Playa Linda Beach Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively. These honorees came to Aruba 36 consecutive times and 40 times in total.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10+ years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Goodwill Ambassador (20+ years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Emerald Ambassador (35+ years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Emerald Ambassadors

Mr. Dean & Mrs. Janis Wellmeier from Waynesville Ohio, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Play Linda Beach Resort bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's beautiful sunsets.
- Aruba's beaches.
- Aruba's food choices.
- "It's our second home"
- "The lifelong friends we've made in Aruba"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island".



Dining in? Try making a local favorite How to make "funchi hasa"

(Oranjestad)—A night in can be just as fun as a night out on the town, especially if you got the right snacks to munch on. One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is "funchi hasa" (fried polenta sticks). A super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics



So what is funchi hasa? Funchi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)

1. Polenta flour*
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour

while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough,



cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce.

Note: We recommend the FUNCHI FRESKU polenta flour brand that is sold in all supermarkets on the island. You can also use yellow corn flour from the brand PAN.

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.

Birds of Aruba

ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Birdlife Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures



and descriptions from the foundations Facebook page.



The Great Egret

Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful and quite, beautiful things start happening in nature.



getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

In its living form of so much more

value than any gemstone. Aruba's smallest and most master of flight. A top pollinator. A hovering Blenchi inspecting the human who just entered his territory.

English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male)
Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannetje).

Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect.□

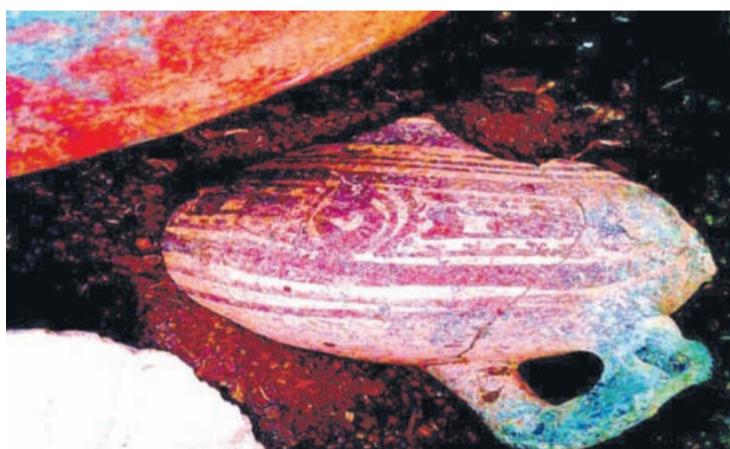
Episode CXLVII -147 - Aspects of ritual art

Etnia Nativa is the island's culturally conscious partner in educating, safeguarding and promoting the islands' cultural resources, inspiring visitors to actively participate as eco-guardians of fragile and material heritage.

People lived on this tiny Caribbean island for thousands of years, adapting to the environment and mastering important steps towards a sustainable civilization. During this social evolution these primitive inhabitants became sedentary and this eliminated much of the responsibility and burden of caring for the elderly during long migratory journeys. This advent gave way to a more dignified existence for the entire community. Spiritual gratitude towards the elements is seen in the care our ancestors gave in preparing to perform various aspects of their ritual art.

Ancestors who performed their sacred ceremonies devoted to respect, like rituals dedicated to their deads.

From our archaeological findings it was possible to determine their social and political organizations and



by studying the remains of their tombs it was possible to establish a differentiation in their status and hierarchy for each individual.

The inhabitants of the large towns practiced four or five different forms of burial rituals.

These various forms represented social differences in the community. The back-

ible offerings. The gift offerings we found in large vessels or urns: direct burial in large storage containers.

Secondary urn burials were also found which are results of a complicated ritual processes; in fact, the dead are buried twice. The corpse is first buried in the ground, after a one or a few years, the bones are excavated. These bones or skeletal remains later meticulously cleaned for their permanent resting place in a fairly small container. If, after such a procedure, the bones are buried in a large vessel, researchers may misinterpret it as a direct urn burial.

We have a pretty good idea of the whole process of secondary urn burial from existing descriptions of such "double" burials. They are practiced to this day by the Wayu indigenous people, who live on the Guajira peninsula on the border between Venezuela and Colombia.

There is evidence that the Dabajuroid ceramic people aka Caquetios, also had a fifth type of burial in caves outside their villages.

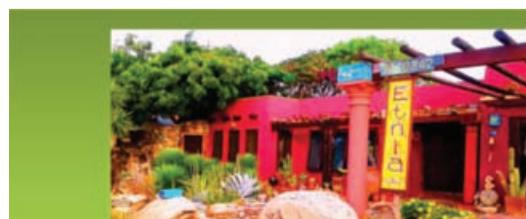
More comparisons can be made between the Gu-



jiros and the pre-Columbian population of Aruba, such as their environment, diet and religion, which had a lot to do with the way in which the natives, particularly from this area, related to the world of the dead and beyond; how to prepare each and every one of your deceased relatives for their spiritual journey through the underworld and into the land of their dead ancestors and friends.

If you are intrigued regarding Aruba, its origins and its cultural heritage, become part of an exclusive visitor's experience, by appointment only, of the cozy home-atelier called "Etnia Nativa". A private residential collection of native Aruban objects, art, archaeological artifacts, historical furniture and more. While the facilities itself is the result of the transforming recyclable materials into an artistic dwelling.

Meet the "Island-Insight" columnist at his home and get a peek at the heart of island existence! Book your visit WhatsApp + 297 592 2702 or mail: etnianativa03@gmail.com□



Article by: Etnia Nativa

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Etnia Nativa is close to the high rise hotels



Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost: Aruban fruits and vegetables

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mangoes hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel

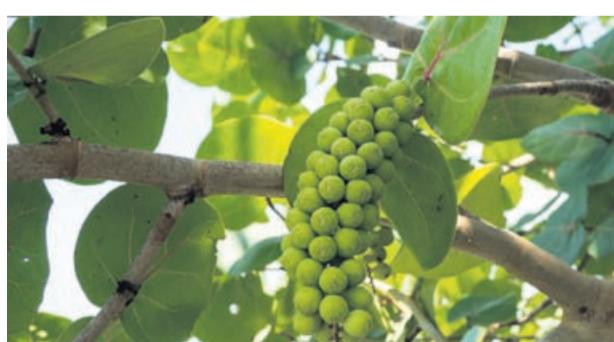
This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year-round.

Kenepa



Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif



There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of

fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu



Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind



A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and have their specific talents to boost your immune system. Start the day with a 'batida' (smoothie) enriched with a local veggie touch or select your restaurant that offers local vegetable dishes to get the real pure taste of it.

Comcomber chiquito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Comcomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture—more so than snap beans—and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

Pampuna



In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruban restaurants is Sopa Di Pompuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 42 Less

1 Under-ground deposits 43 A lot

44 Helper: Abbr.

5 Neighbor

9 Border

10 Script

makeup

12 Arrested

13 Detail map

14 Thankless

sort

16 Parisian

pal

17 Candle

count

18 Moroccan

port

20 Fenway

team

22 Tacks on

23 Fielder's

goof

25 High point

28 Clue

heading

32 Coarse-

grained

rock

34 Be

litigious

35 Slangy

refusal

36 Making

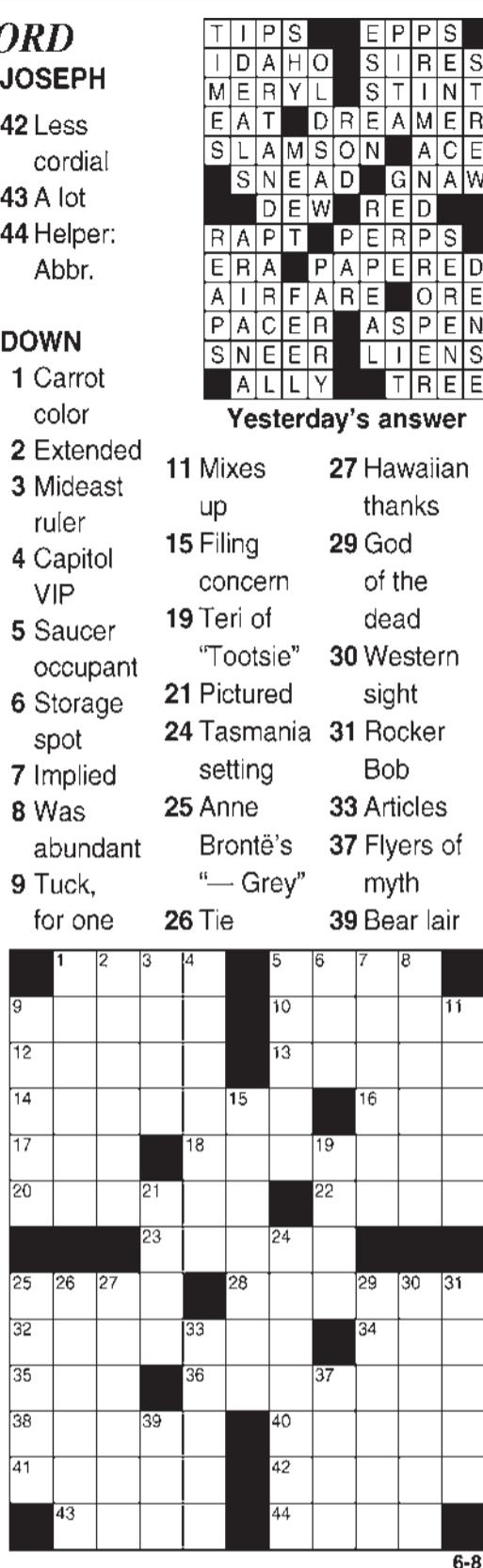
the rent?

38 Duck

40 Like Loki

41 Witch trial

town



A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

6-8

CRYPTOQUOTE

T R K X M S Q R X I U M K H M V

U H Z J . M E G M P V U H , T S ' U X M S

D T W H T R K Q M L H D H U U .

— W H R X P V H H A H U

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: I THRIVE ON OBSTACLES. IF I'M TOLD THAT IT CAN'T BE DONE, THEN I PUSH HARDER. — ISSA RAE

Cruise ship Schedule: September 03 - 24 2024

		ARR	DEPT	BERTH
TUE	03	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00 09.00 20.00 22.00	B C 1 1
WED	04	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00 21.00	C 1
TUE	10	CELEBRITY BEYOND CARNIVAL CELEBRATION CARNIVAL VISTA	08.00 08.00 13.00 21.00 22.00	B C I 1
TUE	17	CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00 22.00	C 1
TUE	24	CELEBRITY BEYOND CARNIVAL MAGIC	08.00 09.00 21.00 22.00	B C 1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

Supermarket hours



(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Electrical power



Drinking water



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

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Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

Mpox outbreaks in Africa could be ended in 6 months, WHO chief says



Red Cross officials create awareness around mpox in the Don Bosco refugee camp in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo, Thursday, Aug. 22, 2023.

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — The head of the World Health Organization believes the ongoing mpox outbreaks in Africa might be stopped in the next six months, and said Friday that the agency's first shipment of vaccines should arrive in Congo within days.

To date, Africa has received just a tiny fraction of the vaccines needed to slow the spread of the virus, especially in Congo, which has the most cases — more than 18,000 suspected cases and 629 deaths.

"With the governments' leadership and close cooperation between partners, we believe we can stop these outbreaks in the next six months," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said at a press briefing.

He said that while mpox infections have been rising quickly in the last few weeks, there have been relatively few deaths. Tedros also noted there were 258 cases of the newest version of mpox, with patients identified in Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Sweden and Thailand. Earlier this month, WHO declared the ongoing mpox outbreaks in Africa a global emergency, hoping to spur a robust global

response to the disease on a continent where cases were spreading largely unnoticed for years, including in Nigeria. In May, scientists detected a new version of the disease in Congo that they think could be spreading more easily.

Mpox, also known as monkeypox, is related to smallpox but typically causes milder symptoms, including fever, headache and body aches. In severe cases, people can develop painful sores and blisters on the face, chest, hands and genitals. Mpox is typically spread via close skin-to-skin

contact. WHO estimated about 230,000 vaccines could be sent "imminently" to Congo and elsewhere. The agency said it was also working on education campaigns to raise awareness of how people could avoid spreading mpox in countries with outbreaks.

Maria Van Kerkhove, who directs WHO's epidemic and pandemic diseases department, said the agency was working to expedite vaccine access for affected countries — given the limited supply available.

Scientists have previously pointed out that without a better understanding of how mpox is spreading in Africa, it may be difficult to know how best to use the shots.

Earlier this week, the head of Africa's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the continent was hoping to receive about 380,000 doses of mpox vaccines promised by donors, including the U.S. and the European Union. That's less than 15% of the doses authorities have said are needed to end the mpox outbreaks in Congo. □

ARUBA TODAY **BONDIA ARUBA**

How to reach us!

 A map of downtown Aruba showing streets like Weststraat, Scheepstraat, and Caya G.F. Betico Croes. A magnifying glass is focused on a specific location, which is the Bondia Aruba office. The office is located near the Royal Plaza Mall and the High Rise Hotels. The map also shows the L.G. Smith Boulevard and the Bus terminal.



HEALTH

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San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:
Paradera : Tel. 586 8181
San Nicolas:
Centro Medico: Tel. 584 5119

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
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Quaid looks (and sounds) the part, but 'Reagan' is more glowing commercial than biopic

By JOCELYN NOVECK

AP National Writer

"Is there anything worse than an actor with a cause?" asks an annoyed Jane Wyman, Ronald Reagan's first wife, early in "Reagan," the new biopic starring Dennis Quaid.

Well, after watching two more hours of this story, an adoring look back at the man who served two terms as our 40th president, we can report that there is definitely one thing worse: An actor without a movie.

Let's not blame the star, though. Quaid, who has played more than one president, has certainly got the charismatic grin, the pomaded hair and especially that distinctive, folksy voice down close your eyes, and it sounds VERY familiar.

If he were to appear on "Saturday Night Live" in the role, it would feel like a casting coup akin to Larry David as Bernie Sanders.

But this is not an "SNL" skit, despite the fact that Jon Voight appears throughout with a heavy Russian accent as a KGB spy, but we'll get to that. This is a 135-minute film that demands a lot more depth. And, so, to co-opt a political phrase from Bill Clinton, whom Quaid



This image released by ShowBiz Direct shows Dennis Quaid in a scene from "Reagan."

Associated Press

also has played: It's the script, stupid.

Lovingly directed by Sean McNamara with a screenplay by Howard Klausner, "Reagan" begins with a chilling event (and a parallel to a recent one): the assassination attempt on Reagan in Washington in March 1981, only two months after he became president. There are those who say Reagan cemented his relationship with the public by surviving that attempt; he

famously told wife Nancy from his bed: "Honey, I forgot to duck." In any case, the filmmakers use the event to set up their story, and will return to it later on, chronologically.

But their early point is that Reagan came away from the scare with a divine plan. "My mother used to say that everything in life happens for a reason, even the most disheartening setbacks," he says. And as he will tell Tip O'Neill, the House speaker,

everything from then on will be part of that divine plan. The yet broader point here is that Reagan, according to this film, was basically solely responsible for the eventual downfall of the Soviet Union, because he showed the people of the world what freedom meant. "I knew that he was the one," says Viktor Petrovich, the retired spy played by Voight as a narrator figure throughout meaning the one who would bring it all

down. The script is based on Paul Kengor's "The Crusader: Ronald Reagan and the Fall of Communism," and Kengor has said Viktor is based on a number of KGB agents and analysts who tracked Reagan for years. That point is made early and often. The rest is a history reel, with lots of glorious, loving lighting around our star. We go back to his younger years, learning about his mother and what she taught him about faith, and then his Hollywood years as an actor, Screen Actors Guild president (and a Democrat) before fully committing to politics, and the GOP.

We also see a newly divorced Reagan meet a winsome Nancy Davis, who will become his second wife, loving partner and constant companion. Like Quaid, Penelope Ann Miller is a perfectly fine actor who has little nuance to work with here.

Together, they embark on the path to political stardom, starting with the California governorship. When they arrive at a neighbor's home to campaign, the housewife at the door hears Reagan's "RR" initials and thinks he's Roy Rogers. □

Pop group ABBA ask Donald Trump to stop using their songs, but Trump team says they have the OK

By MARK KENNEDY

AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Swed-

ish supergroup ABBA has asked Donald Trump to stop using their music at

campaign rallies, but the Republican presidential nominee's campaign says it has permission.

"ABBA has recently discovered the unauthorized use of their music and videos at a Trump event through videos that appeared online," said a statement to The Associated Press from the band, whose hits include "Waterloo," "The Winner Takes It All" and "Money, Money, Money."

"As a result, ABBA and its representative has promptly requested the removal and deletion of such content. No request has been received; therefore, no permission or license has been granted."

A spokesman for the Trump campaign said it had obtained a license. "The campaign had a license to play ABBA music through our agreement with BMI and ASCAP," the spokesperson told the AP.

ABBA joins a long list of performers who've objected to Trump using their songs. Ahead of the 2020 election, that included Bruce Springsteen, Rihanna, Phil Collins, Pharrell, John Fogerty, Neil Young, Eddy Grant, Panic! at the Disco, R.E.M. and Guns N' Roses.

This cycle, Celine Dion has asked the candidate to stop using "My Heart Will Go On" and Beyoncé blocked Trump from using her song

"Freedom" in a campaign video. In 2016, Adele asked Trump to quit playing her songs at political rallies.

Campaigns don't need an artist's express permission to play their songs at rallies as long as the political organization or the venue has gotten what's known as a blanket license from the performing rights organizations ASCAP and BMI.

Swedish daily newspaper Svenska Dagbladet said its reporter in July attended a Trump rally in Minnesota where "The Winner Takes it All" was played. Universal Music in Sweden said videos had surfaced of ABBA's music being played at at least one Trump event. □



Republican presidential nominee former President Donald Trump speaks at the National Guard Association of the United States' 146th General Conference, Monday, Aug. 26, 2024, in Detroit.

Associated Press

Coco Gauff keeps her U.S. Open title defense alive by coming back to beat Elina Svitolina

By HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Coco Gauff turned things around after being a set down and beat Elina Svitolina 3-6, 6-3, 6-3 in the U.S. Open's third round on Friday, extending the 20-year-old American's defense of her first Grand Slam title.

The third-seeded Gauff made mistake after mistake in the first set at Arthur Ashe Stadium and dropped its last 11 points against the 27th-seeded Svitolina, a three-time major semifinalist.

"She's a fighter," Gauff said. "I knew I had to play my best."

Gauff managed to reel off nine of 11 games in one stretch and won despite losing the opening set, something she did three times en route to winning the 2023 trophy at the U.S. Open, including in the final against Aryna Sabalenka. The secret this time?

"I tried to be more aggressive on my forehand side," Gauff said, "and tried to make less errors on the backhand."

Sounds simple enough, right?

By the conclusion of one set, Gauff's totals were 16



Coco Gauff, of the United States, can't catch up with a shot from Elina Svitolina, of Ukraine, during the third round of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Friday, Aug. 30, 2024, in New York.

Associated Press

unforced errors nine on backhands and just seven winners. She put only 45% of her first serves in. She went 0 for 3 on break points. She allowed Svitolina to claim 19 of the 28 points that lasted more than four strokes. All of those numbers got better across the last two sets. And something else changed, at the behest of her coaches: Gauff got the partisan crowd more

involved.

"My team was kind of like telling me that (the fans) were on the edge of their seats," Gauff explained. "So I said, 'OK, I need to erupt so you guys can erupt.'" This comeback ends a five-match losing streak for Gauff against opponents ranked in the top 50 and might be just what she needs to move past a recent slump that saw her

win just five of her previous nine matches.

Such a contrast to a year ago, when Gauff won 18 of 19, and 12 in a row, along the way to two tuneup titles on hard courts and then the championship at the U.S. Open that made her the first U.S. teenager to triumph at Flushing Meadows since Serena Williams in 1999.

On Sunday, Gauff will play

for a berth in the quarterfinals against No. 13 Emma Navarro of the U.S. who beat Gauff in Wimbledon's fourth round last month. Navarro defeated No. 19 Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

Everything began to change for Gauff on Friday after 1 hour, 10 minutes, when she broke to lead 4-2 in the second set, smacking a cross-court forehand winner. She celebrated with a yell of "Come on!" and raised her left hand to wiggle her fingers and ask the spectators to get louder.

Soon that set belonged to Gauff, who closed it with a 94 mph ace, shook a fist and shouted.

In the third, with UConn women's basketball stars Paige Bueckers and Azzi Fudd sitting in her guest box at Ashe, Gauff broke right away, then held to go up 2-0 with the help of one 38-stroke point that she took when Svitolina sent a backhand wide.

Soon it was 5-1 for Gauff, whose only late wobble came when she served for the match at 5-2. She wasted three match points and got broken there. But Gauff broke right back to close things out. □

Miami Dolphins extend coach Mike McDaniel through 2028 season, AP source says

By ALANIS THAMES

AP Sports Writer

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP) — The Miami Dolphins want Mike McDaniel to be around for a while.

The head coach who was just the third Dolphins coach to make the playoffs in each of his first two seasons at the helm signed a contract Friday that extends him through the 2028 season. His initial contract was going to expire in 2025.

A person familiar with the deal confirmed the news first reported by ESPN, speaking to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal hadn't been announced.

The Dolphins have gone 20-14 in two seasons under McDaniel, who was hired in 2022 to replace Brian Flores. In the first head coaching job of his nearly two-decades long career, McDaniel led the Dolphins to back-to-back playoff appearances for the first time since 2000-01.

McDaniel made a name for himself rather quickly in Miami, whether for his tendency to go viral for his quick wit and quirky idiosyncrasies, or for the rapid offensive success that he's ushered in on a Dolphins team that had long struggled on that side of the ball.

Creative play calling and an elaborate rushing attack have been McDaniel's calling cards as he has tweaked and enhanced parts of revered offensive mind Mike Shanahan's scheme that he learned working with the former coach in Washington. □



Miami Dolphins head coach Mike McDaniel watches the team before the start of a pre season NFL football game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Friday, Aug. 23, 2024, in Tampa, Fla.

Associated Press

The Casino Aruba at Hilton Unveils Exciting New Slot Machines and Announces Reopening of Main Lobby Door

Oranjestad, Aruba—The Casino Aruba at Hilton is thrilled to announce the arrival of the newest addition to its gaming floor, the exhilarating Jackpot Carnival™ slot machines. Alongside this exciting launch, we are pleased to inform our guests that the main lobby door is now back open following the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort's main lobby renovations.'

Introducing Jackpot Carnival™ Slot Machines

Step right up and experience the thrill of the carnival with our brand-new Jackpot Carnival™ slot machines. The fun never stops with this vibrant and engaging game, now featuring your favorite Aristocrat characters. Players can look forward to climbing the multiplier chart with the return of the popular Clown feature, and the all-new hammer bonus offering credit prizes and free games. The Jackpot Carnival™ promises a gaming experience full of excitement, colorful visuals, and big win potential.



"We are always looking to bring the latest and most entertaining gaming options to our guests, and Jackpot Carnival™ is a fantastic addition to our floor," said Danilo Hernandez, Casino Slot Manager at The Casino Aruba at Hilton. "We can't wait

for our players to enjoy the unique features and thrilling gameplay that this new machine offers."

Main Lobby Door Reopens

In addition to the launch of the Jackpot Carnival™ slot machines, we are delighted to announce that the main lobby door of the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort is once again open. The recently completed renovations have revitalized our main lobby, enhancing the welcoming atmosphere for all our guests. We appreciate everyone's patience during this time and are excited to welcome you through our newly renovated entrance.

"We're pleased to reopen our main lobby door, providing a refreshed and more inviting entrance for our guests," said Jeannot Lacle, Casino Manager. "The renovations reflect our commitment to offering a superior experience from the moment our guests arrive."

Join Us for the Excitement

The Casino Aruba at Hilton invites all guests to join us



and experience the new Jackpot Carnival™ slot machines. Enjoy the lively atmosphere, the chance for big wins, and the convenience of our newly reopened main lobby door. For more information about The Casino Aruba at Hilton, please visit www.tcaruba.com

About The Casino Aruba at Hilton

Located in the heart of the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort, The Casino Aruba at Hilton offers a premier gaming experience with a wide variety of slots, table games, and exciting promotions. Our commitment to exceptional service and entertainment makes us a top destination for both locals and tourists. □



Brewers beat the Reds in 10 innings in the first game of a doubleheader

By GARY SCHATZ

Associated Press

CINCINNATI (AP) — The Milwaukee Brewers broke a 4-4 tie in the 10th inning on a double play as designated runner Eric Haase scored, and Devin Williams made it stand up for a 5-4 win over the Cincinnati Reds on Friday in the first game of a doubleheader. The Brewers improved to 6-5 in extra-inning games. The Red dropped to 3-4. Pinch hitter Brice Turang had a bunt single that moved Haase to third against Alexis Diaz (1-5). The Reds closer had two consecutive blown saves in his last two appearances.

Williams entered the game for the bottom of the 10th and earned his seventh save in eight tries. Williams has retired 26 straight Reds batters dating back to 2022.

"I was always going to use Devin if we took the lead," manager Pat Murphy said. "He's the one guy who can get a punch (strikeout) and maybe not give up a run. That's why I chose Turang to bunt for a hit. He was safe but even if he wasn't, we're going to get one run maybe. That's not the way you do it on the road. Usually, you play for two. I just felt like with Devin available. It doesn't always work." □